



U.S. Immigration
and Customs
Enforcement

January 19, 2006

News Release

KIDNAPPER SENTENCED TO 9 YEARS IMPRISONMENT

DALLAS — A human smuggler who kidnapped two children to extort extra money from the parents was sentenced today to nine years in federal prison. This case was investigated by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE); today's sentencing was announced by U.S. Attorney Richard B. Roper, Northern District of Texas.

Guillermo Rodriguez-Flores was sentenced today by the Honorable Ed Kinkeade, U.S. District Judge, to 108 months imprisonment. Rodriguez-Flores pleaded guilty in September to kidnapping two minor children. Rodriguez-Flores had been a fugitive, was arrested in Arizona in November 2004, and has been in federal custody since that time.

Guillermo Rodriguez-Flores and co-defendant Ismael Jesus Valora-Flores were charged in a superseding indictment with conspiracy to commit kidnapping, kidnapping, and unlawfully transporting illegal aliens. That indictment alleged that Guillermo-Flores and Valora-Flores conspired with each other, and other alien smugglers, to kidnap, and hold for ransom two children, a 16-year-old girl, and a 12-year-old boy. Defendant Valora-Flores pleaded guilty in April 2003 to kidnapping two minor children, and is scheduled to be sentenced March 30.

According to court documents, in October 2002, the mother of the children made arrangements in Mexico with a Mexican national known as "Jorge" to smuggle herself and three of her children — the 16 year old, the 12 year old, and an infant child, into the United States for a \$3400 fee. Jorge instructed the mother to travel by bus to Tejupilco, at an expense of 4500 Mexican pesos that was not included in the agreed-upon fee. From that location, the mother and children traveled to a small town near the Arizona border where Jorge had reserved a room. A few days later the family traveled by cab to another location as instructed by Jorge. This time Jorge told them to each have 20 pesos in case they were stopped in the desert and robbed. From this location another male met them and then guided a total of nine aliens through the desert for two hours, during which time they were each robbed of the 20 pesos.

They were harbored for a week at an unknown location in Phoenix in a small home with iron bars on the windows with all the aliens placed in one room. On about Oct. 27, 2002, the two older children were held for ransom in Phoenix while alien smugglers, including Rodriguez-Flores, transported the children's mother to Austin so that she could obtain ransom money for the release of her children. About one week later, Valora-Flores transported the children from Phoenix to Dallas. Co-defendant Rodriguez-Flores advised the mother that the children had been transported to Dallas, but that he would deliver them the next day to a certain Fiesta grocery store in Austin, Texas. The mother sent the kidnappers additional money to complete their fee, but Rodriguez-Flores demanded further ransom from her for the children's release when they arrived in Austin. When she wasn't able to produce the additional money, he and Valora-Flores transported the children back to Dallas where Rodriguez-Flores continued to hold the children for ransom at an apartment. The U.S. Marshals Service intervened and later that day, Nov. 4, 2002, the children were released near a retail store in Dallas, and Valora- Flores was apprehended.

"This is a classic case of how human smugglers may separate family members and then use the children as pawns to extort more money from the parents," said John Chakwin, special agent-in-charge of the ICE Dallas Office of Investigations. "Human smugglers such as Rodriguez-Flores have repeatedly shown that they have no regard for human life. We will continue to work with law enforcement agencies and the U.S. Attorney's office to find and prosecute these smugglers to the fullest extent of the law. Chakwin heads the ICE office which covers north Texas and the State of Oklahoma.

U.S. Attorney Roper praised the cooperative investigative efforts of the Department of Homeland Security – U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement and the U.S. Marshals Service.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Tammy Reno, Northern District of Texas, prosecuted this case.

#ICE#

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement was established in March 2003 as the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security. ICE is comprised of four integrated divisions that form a 21st century law enforcement agency with broad responsibilities for a number of key homeland security priorities.